DARK HORSE COMICS®

19 march 93

INSIDER™

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMICS™

STAR WARS
NEW STRIP PREMIERES!

TWO ALL-NEW SERIES BEGIN
- *James Bond 007: A Silent Armageddon*
- *The Blue Lily*

SNEAK PREVIEW
- *The Dirty Pair*

MARCH IS MANGA MONTH AT DARK HORSE!
- Reader contest
- "Manga 101" by Toren Smith

...AND MORE!

DARK HORSE COMICS

On the cover:
James Bond 007: A Silent Armageddon
cover art by John M. Burns

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FRONT COVER ART BY
JOHN M. BURNS FROM
JAMES BOND:
A SILENT ARMAGEDDON

INSIDE FRONT COVER ART
PENCILLED BY CHRIS GOSSETT
AND INKED BY MIKE BRARREIRRO
FROM *TALES OF THE JEDI*

INSIDE BACK COVER ART BY
PAUL JOHNSON
FROM *ALIENS: SACRIFICE*

EDITOR: KRIS YOUNG
PROOFREADER: SUZANNE TAYLOR
DESIGN & PRODUCTION: EGON SELBY

™IAN FLEMING'S JAMES BOND 007

JAMES BOND 007: A SILENT ARMAGEDDON #1 (OF 4)

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada.
32 painted color pages, saddle-stitched deluxe format, painted cover.

Bimonthly. Shipping March 9, 1993.

Death in virtual reality. Has Bond met his match with Omega, a computer that has acquired the most valuable possession of all — consciousness? Bond turns for help from a most unexpected source — a thirteen-year-old girl. *James Bond 007: A Silent Armageddon* takes Bond to new dimensions of adventure.

Written by: **Simon Jowett**
Painted illustrations by: **John Burns**
Painted cover by: **John Burns**

TERMINAL POINT™

TERMINAL POINT #2 (OF 3)

The unfolding dimensional drama in 1946 New York kicks into high gear as Robert Rhodes, a brilliant and ruthless industrialist, discovers that a being from another dimension is walking the streets of Manhattan! That remarkable being is none other than Pilot, who is embarking on his own quest to stop The Terminus Council's plot to control all of time. As Rhodes closes in on Pilot, so are the forces of The Terminus, setting the stage for a pitched battle between the future's warriors of time and yesterday's man of tomorrow!

$2.50 U.S.,
$3.15 Canada.
32 B&W pages,
painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping
March 30, 1993.

Written and illustrated by: **Bruce Zick** *(Thor)*
Painted cover by: **Bruce Zick**

PROPELLER-MAN™

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

PROPELLERMAN #2 (OF 8)

$2.95 U.S.,
$3.70 Canada.
32 painted color pages,
saddle-stitched deluxe
format, painted cover.

Bimonthly. Shipping
March 9, 1993.

Propellerman discovers a key to his missing memory inside a city-destroying monster and must evade a squadron of helicopters in order to protect it.

Bonus! Beginning with *Propellerman* #2, each even-numbered issue of this visually stunning series will include two bound-in trading cards featuring Matthias Schultheiss' gorgeous cover art.

Written and painted by: **Matthias Schultheiss** (*Bell's Theorem*)
Painted cover by: **Matthias Schultheiss**

THE BLUE LILY™

THE BLUE LILY #1 (OF 4)

$3.95 U.S., $4.95 Canada.
48 color pages (no ads!), saddle-stitched deluxe format, painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 9, 1993.

What do you get when you cross a hardboiled private investigator with a sentient robot? None other than Rusty Spade, metaphysical metal detective! What starts out as a simple missing-persons case soon leads Rusty down a dizzying path of intrigue, high finance, and corporate crime, all set against a futuristic backdrop in which entire star systems are bought and sold on Wall Street.

No science-fiction or mystery fan will want to miss this series; it deftly blends the best elements of both genres, with just the right touch of humor. And if you like the black-and-white artwork shown here, we guarantee that the rich, hand-painted colors of the final version will blow your socks off!

Written, illustrated, lettered, and colored by: **Angus McKie** (*Heavy Metal*)
Painted cover by: **Angus McKie**

COLONIAL

ALIENS™

MARINES

ALIENS: COLONIAL MARINES #3 (OF 12)

$2.50 U.S.,
$3.15 Canada.
32 color pages,
painted cover.

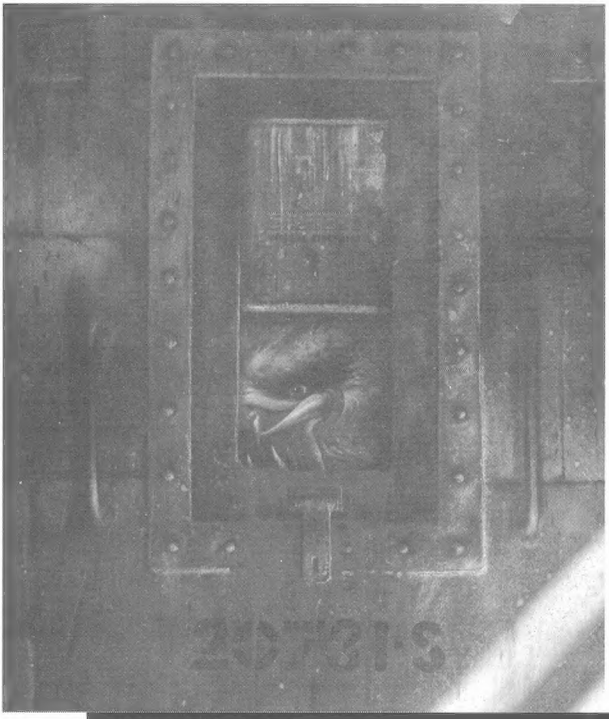
Monthly. Shipping
March 2, 1993.

Lt. Henry and his crew of ne'er-do-wells are — to put it simply — in the soup. Stranded in a space station with a pack of bloodthirsty Aliens waiting behind every access hatch, this platoon of Colonial Marines will leave no shell unfired in their struggle to survive. And as the pulse-fire echoes through the corridors, a hideous plan of mutating humans into Aliens is uncovered, leading Lt. Henry to wonder if this is more than just a random infestation.

Written by: **Chris Warner** *(Black Cross)*
Pencilled by: **Tony Akins** *(Hard Looks)*
Breakdowns and inks by: **Paul Guinan** *(Heartbreakers, Hard Looks)*
Painted cover by: **Robert Mentor**

PREDATOR™

RACE WAR



Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

$2.50 U.S., $3.15 Canada.
32 color pages, painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 16, 1993.

PREDATOR: RACE WAR #2 (OF 4)

Behind the walls of the Paloverde State Penitentiary, a Predator has claimed its first victim. Meanwhile, on the streets of Chicago, Cross goes hunting — only to end up being hunted himself!

Written by: **Andrew Vachss** (*Hard Looks*)
and **Randy Stradley** (*Aliens vs. Predator*)
Pencilled by: **Jordan Raskin**
Inked by: **Rick Bryant**
Painted cover by: **Dave Dorman**

John Byrne's NEXT MEN™

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

$2.50 U.S., $3.15 Canada.
32 color pages, color cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 16, 1993.

JOHN BYRNE'S NEXT MEN #13

Tempers flare within the ranks of the Next Men! Jack's reaction to finding out what went on between Nathan and Jasmine in Russia may be the death of Nathan. In the continuing M4 series, Mark's quest to find out more about his missing history has Amanda and him on the run.

Created, written, pencilled, inked, and lettered by: **John Byrne**
Colored by: **Matt Webb**
Painted cover by: **John Byrne**

John Byrne's NEXT MEN™

JOHN BYRNE'S NEXT MEN COLLECTION

Readers' note:
Hardcover edition limited to 1,000 copies.

$49.95 U.S.,
$62.50 Canada
(signed limited edition).
184 color pages,
6 5/8" x 10 1/4"
hardcover with
dust jacket.
ISBN: 1-878574-71-X

$16.95 U.S.,
$21.50 Canada
(trade paperback).
184 four-color pages,
6 5/8" x 10 1/4"
ISBN: 1-878574-70-1

Shipping March 23, 1993.

Five mutates from Project Next Men escape the elaborate decades-long secret experiment to find themselves in a completely unfamiliar world. During a mysterious encounter in the desert, Bethany, Nathan, Danny, Jack, and Jazz begin to realize that they have been locked in a shared fantasy-world. Now they must come to terms with the real world and their strange powers before their former captors track them down. This collects issues #0-6 of the popular comic book. Featuring a new painted cover by John Byrne. The limited edition includes all-new tip in art and is signed by the creator.

Created, written, pencilled, inked, and lettered by: **John Byrne**
Colored by: **Matt Webb**
Painted cover by: **John Byrne**

GRENDEL™

war child

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers. This issue contains violence, sexual scenes, and harsh language.

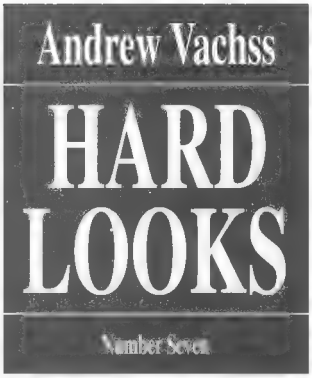
$2.50 U.S., $3.15 Canada.
32 color pages, painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 2, 1993.

GRENDEL: WAR CHILD #8 (OF 10)

It's the "Devil in Pursuit" as young Jupiter's been kidnapped. Grendel and the rebels follow the trail across the frozen wastes, with the red devils hot on their heels. This issue not only features the return of a fabled Grendel nemesis but also includes a cameo appearance by "Milk" of Evan Dorkin's *Milk & Cheese*. It just gets weirder.

Written by: **Matt Wagner**
Pencilled by: **Patrick McEown**
Inked by: **Matt Wagner**
Colored by: **Bernie Mireault** and **Kathryn Delaney**
Painted cover by: **Matt Wagner**



"Stone Magic"
Adapted by: **Gary Pleece**
and **Warren Pleece**
"White Alligator"
Adapted by: **James Colbert**
and **Tom Artis**
"Man to Man"
Adapted by: **Neal Barrett, Jr.**
and **Jack Pollock**
"Working Roots"
Written by: **Andrew Vachss**

Color cover by: **Warren Pleece**

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada.
32 B&W pages, color cover.

Bimonthly. Shipping March 16, 1993.

HARD LOOKS #7

Dark Horse continues to provide the cutting-edge of suspense fiction in Andrew Vachss' *Hard Looks*. This issue, look for Cross, the main character of *Predator: Race War*, in "Stone Magic."

THE LUCK IN THE HEAD (GRAPHIC NOVEL)

This eerie and visually arresting tale is set in the grotesque city of Uroconium, where Ardwick Crome dreams of a strange ritual from his childhood. The women of his village pursue a "lamb"; to eat a pie made from its head is considered good luck. But in his dream, the living animal itself is offered to Ardwick Crome, and the gift's significance makes it too dangerous to accept...

$11.95 U.S., $14.95 Canada.
ISBN: 1-878574-46-9
80 color pages, squarebound, painted cover.

Shipping March 23, 1993.

Written by: **M. John Harrison**
Illustrated by: **Ian Miller**
Painted cover by: **Ian Miller**

$2.50 U.S.,
$3.15 Canada.
32 B&W pages
(no ads!),
painted cover.

Shipping March 23, 1993.

It's always a pleasure to introduce a bright new talent into the comics field, a creator whose powerful visual skills are matched by an assured command of narrative: in short, a true storyteller. Such a talent is Glenn Wong, and Dark Horse is proud to present his first major work, *The Young Cynics Club*. You'll find no superheroes, monsters, or pin-up girls here; this is a tale of ordinary people, of longtime friends growing up and growing apart. The wry authenticity of Wong's characterizations is underscored by the mature strength of his illustration, reminiscent of the spare elegance of Steve Rude and Jaime Hernandez. Insightful and sentimental, funny and sad, *The Young Cynics Club* is the first act of a career you won't want to miss.

Written and illustrated by: **Glenn Wong**
Painted cover by. **Glenn Wong**

BASEBALL GREATS
The Bob Gibson Story

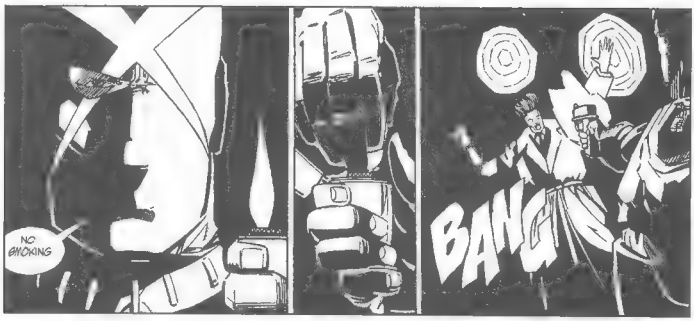
BASEBALL GREATS #2: THE BOB GIBSON STORY

$2.95 U.S.
$3.75 Canada
32 more pages. painted cover.

Monthly Shipping
March 9, 1993.

It's a quick and heroic season in every sense for current Dark Horse #1 pitcher, as he continues his series of action-packed biographies of some of the biggest baseball with the story of Hall of Famer Bob Gibson, arguably one of the most dominating pitchers in the history of the game.

Written by: **Gary Fox**
Pencilled by: **Aaron Lopresti**
Inked by: **Jorge Pacheco**
Painted cover by: **Kelly Akins**



"Who is X?" Part 1

Written by: **Jerry Prosser**
Pencilled by: **N. Steven Harris**
Inked by **Dan Davis**

"RoboCop: Invasions," Part 3
Written by: **Steven Grant**
Pencilled by: **Nick Gnazzo**
Inked by **Bruce Patterson**

"Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi," Part 2
Written by: **Tom Veitch**
Drawn by: **Janine Johnston**

"James Bond: Light of My Death," Part 1
Written by: **Das Petrou**
Illustrated by. **John Watkiss**

Color cover by: **Joe Phillips**

DARK HORSE COMICS™

DARK HORSE COMICS #8

$2.50 U.S.,
$3.15 Canada.
32 color pages,
painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping
March 30, 1993.

Dark Horse Comics introduces comicdom's newest hero, "X," a violent force against crime in the dark and gritty underbelly of the city. Also included this issue is the premiere of a new James Bond adventure, "Light of My Death," and the continuation of our "RoboCop: Invasions" and "Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi" stories. "X" marks the spot on the comic racks this month.

CHEVAL noir™

"Rork: Starlight"
Written and illustrated by: **Andreas**

"Demon"
Written and illustrated by: **Masashi Tanaka**

"The Man from the Ciguri"
Written and illustrated by: **Moebius**

"The Lost Autobiography of J. Edgar Hoover"
Written and illustrated by: **Rick Geary**

"Post-Apocalypse"
Written and illustrated by: **Phil Elliott**

"Caricatures"
Written and illustrated by: **Tom McWeeney**

Painted cover by: **David Mazzucchelli** (*Batman: Year One*)

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada.
32 B&W pages, painted cover.

Monthly Shipping
March 9, 1993

CHEVAL NOIR #40

Don't miss the captivating conclusion of "Rork: Starlight," as Rork makes the acquaintance of a new traveling companion who is ensnared in an odd enchantment! In recognition of Dark Horse Comics' Manga Month, "Demon," a poignant and beautifully rendered tale by Masashi Tanaka, premieres this issue. Moebius fans will be relieved to find "The Man from the Ciguri" resuming his adventures; in the meantime, Rick Geary announces a new biography, and Phil Elliott explores the timid new world of "Post-Apocalypse." This issue also marks the debut of "Caricatures," a strip that features a hilarious but deadpan gorilla with a future in art.

DHP™

DARK HORSE PRESENTS

"The Madwoman of the Sacred Heart"
Written by: **Alexandro Jodorowsky** (*El Topo*)
Illustrated by: **Moebius**

Eudaemon
Written, pencilled, and inked by: **Nelson** (*RoboCop: Prime Suspect*)

Dominique
Written by: **Charles Moore**
Illustrated by: **Jim Balent**

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers. Contains sexual situations, nudity, and possibly controversial religious themes.

$2.25 U.S., $2.80 Canada.
32 B&W pages, color cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 2, 1993.

DARK HORSE PRESENTS #72

Beginning this issue: *Eudaemon*, a three-part prequel to the upcoming miniseries of the same name. The Eudaemon and his partner attempt to rescue an innocent girl who has been kidnapped by beings from the insane and unpredictable world that lies beyond "The Portal." In *Dominique*, another new story, Dominique discovers that the downside to being a freelance undercover operative is that there's no place to go to get out of the crossfire! And the religious/sexual epic "The Madwoman of the Sacred Heart" continues.

STAR WARS

TALES OF THE JEDI

FROM THE SECRET RECESSES OF THE *JEDI HOLOCRON* COME TALES OF AN AGE WHEN THE JEDI KNIGHTS WERE NUMEROUS AND STRONG.

HYPERSPACE TRAVEL BROUGHT THE GALAXY TOGETHER, AND GAVE BIRTH TO A GREAT DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, WHICH GREW, OVER THOUSANDS OF YEARS, TO ENCOMPASS VAST NUMBERS OF INHABITED WORLDS.

THE GROWTH OF THE REPUBLIC DEPENDED ON A GOVERNMENT OF SELFLESS ADMINISTRATORS AND LAWMAKERS... AND ON THE PRESERVATION OF HARMONY AND JUSTICE BY THE HEROIC FRATERNITY OF *JEDI KNIGHTS*.

ULIC QEL-DROMA AND THE BEAST-WARS OF ONDERON

Part One of Six

GOOD RIPOSTE, ULIC!

AH, CAY--THIS *TRAINING DROID'S* OLD AND SLOW!

--ANY *GREEN* WARRIOR CAN ANTICIPATE ITS MOVES!

WELL DONE!

--BUT KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS WITH THE *FORCE*, ULIC!

SOME SAID ULIC QEL-DROMA WAS ARROGANT--

--BUT THOSE WHO KNEW THE YOUNG JEDI BEST SAID HE WAS MERELY POSSESSED OF BOUNDLESS BOLDNESS.
HHIYYAA!
SOMETIMES BOLDNESS IS NOT ENOUGH.
PWEE-RRAMM
ULIC!
YOUR BROTHER LETS HIS COURAGE CLOUD HIS MIND!
TOTT DONEETA SPEAKS WELL, ULIC. A JEDI NEEDS MORE THAN MERE BRAVERY...
OVERCONFIDENCE HAS BEEN THE UNDOING OF MANY A SEASONED WARRIOR.
LET THE FORCE BE YOUR STRENGTH!
YOU'RE RIGHT AS USUAL, MASTER ARCA--
--IF THAT TRAINING DROID HAD BEEN USING DEADLY FORCE, I'D BE SMOKING RUBBLE ABOUT NOW!
NEXT: THE BEASTS OF DXUN!

THE VENUS WARS II #10

Matthew's helicopter has crashed and his attempt to avenge Luisa has failed. He and his friends seek refuge in a remote biological research station with its strange host, Dr. Coli, whose mysterious past has led to his exile here to experiment on vats of seething bacteria. Now his isolated home is in peril, as Rado's troops come to finish them off once and for all!

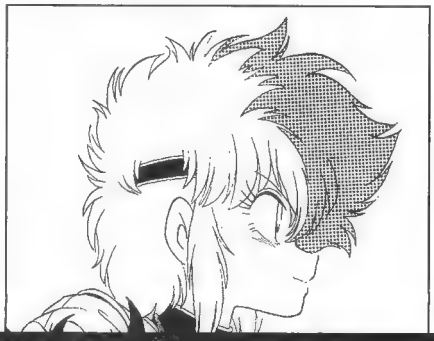
$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada.
40 B&W pages, painted cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 9, 1993.

Written and illustrated by: **Yoshikazu Yasuhiko**
Translation by: **Alan Gleason** and **Toren Smith**
Painted cover by. **Dave Johnson** and **Brian Stelfreeze**

MANGA MONTH AT DARK HORSE COMICS!

CARAVAN KIDD™



CARAVAN KIDD #9

$2.50 U.S., $3.15 Canada.
32 B&W pages, painted cover.

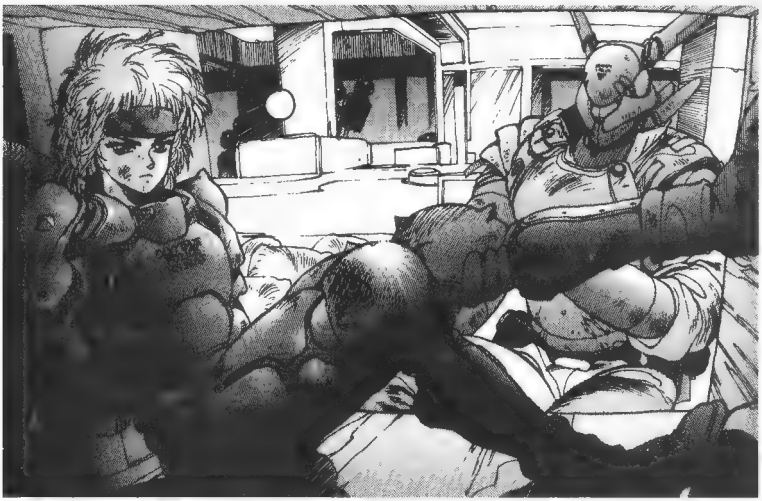
Monthly. Shipping March 23, 1993

Wataru thought he had it hard enough as servant to fugitive swordswoman Mian Toris. Now he's been abducted by her nemesis, the ruthless Empress Shion. As Mian and Babo mount a rescue attempt, Shion offers Wataru the riches of the Hegelbard Empire... if he would only betray Mian!

Written and illustrated by: **Johji Manabe**
Translation by: **Dana Lewis** and **Toren Smith**
Painted cover by: **Johji Manabe**

Appleseed™

MANGA MONTH AT DARK HORSE COMICS! IT'S



APPLESEED 4 (COLLECTION)

$12.95 U.S.,
$16.50 Canada.
216 B&W pages,
squarebound,
painted cover.
ISBN: 1-878574-52-3

Shipping March 30, 1993.

Dark Horse starts its regular publication schedule of manga collections with a bang! Masamune Shirow's acclaimed cyberpunk epic about ESWAT operative Deunan and her cyborg partner Briareos continues its successful run with a fourth collection. Beautiful art and a complex and fully realized future world make this among the best of the manga titles available in the United States.

Written and illustrated by: **Masamune Shirow**
Painted cover by: **Masamune Shirow**

MARCH IS
MANGA MONTH
AT DARK HORSE

What is manga? It's the Japanese word (both singular and plural) for comics. Dark Horse publishes comics from all over the world, and we're proud to include some of the best manga with our many offerings. We're officially declaring March as Manga Month, and to celebrate, this issue of the *Insider* is bursting with manga features!

Beginning on the following page, manga meister **Toren Smith** answers some of the most frequently asked questions about the genre in "Manga 101." Whether you're new to manga or already "in the know," you'll enjoy this article.

Titles for March include the manga classic space opera *The Venus Wars II* by animation great **Yoshikazu Yasuhiko**, the comedy/adventure tales *Caravan Kidd* and *Outlanders Special* #1, both by **Johji Manabe**, and the biotech detective thriller *Version*, by hot new talent **Hishashi Sakaguchi**. The dazzling artistry of **Masamune Shirow** is showcased in *Orion* and the *Appleseed* #4 trade paperback, and **Masashi Tanaka**'s beautifully rendered tale, "Demon," premieres in the March issue of *Cheval Noir*.

Adam Warren is one of many American writers and artists who have been influenced by Japanese style and storytelling. Fans of this artist extraordinaire are in for a treat with a special three-page Sneak Preview of *The Dirty Pair*, beginning on page 23.

If you've never picked up a manga title, there's never been a better time to try — we've got a wide assortment from which to choose. If you're already a manga fan, we've got some new goodies that will satisfy your manga yen. They're all from Dark Horse Comics, publisher of the world's greatest manga!

Manga Art Contest!

We like to feature drawings and contests in the *Insider*, so here's one that's in keeping with our manga theme. To enter, simply draw your favorite character from any Dark Horse manga book: *Godzilla*, *The Dirty Pair*, *Outlanders*, *Intron Depot*, *Version*, *Orion*, *The Venus Wars*, or *Caravan Kidd*. Send in a copy of your sketch to:

Manga Art Contest
c/o Dark Horse Comics
10956 SE Main St.
Milwaukie, OR 97222

Please send photocopies of art only. Art will not be returned. First prize is a copy of Masamune Shirow's *Intron Depot*! This massive art book showcases all of his color work for the last ten years. Second prize is a month's worth of manga! All entries will receive a Dark Horse tattoo absolutely free! The winning entries will be published in a future issue of the *Insider*.

MANGA 101

AN INTERVIEW WITH "PROFESSOR" TOREN SMITH

Welcome to Manga 101! For those of you who would like to learn about this entertaining art form, we have enlisted the help of Professor Toren Smith, translator and all-around manga expert. Eminently qualified, Smith tells us "I've spent several years in Japan, traveled back and forth at least twenty times, gotten lost in Tokyo and Osaka, butted heads with the *yakuza*, been an animation character, had Osamu Tezuka spill beer on me, lived with a houseful of demented animators, and even acquired a lovely and talented Japanese wife (complete with wacky in-laws)." He's also co-translated over 8,000 pages of manga (that's not a misprint — that's *eight thousand* pages). Today's class will cover answers to some commonly asked manga questions. There will be a short quiz later.
– John Weeks, manga editor

"Why aren't comics as popular in the United States as they are in Japan?" That's a good question. For that matter, why aren't they just as popular in the rest of the world? As Harvey Pekar said, "Comics are just words and pictures — there's no limit to how good the words can be, and there's no limit to how good the pictures can be." American appreciation of comics has been handicapped by the assumption that they're just for kids, as well as by the preconception that they must be in color and about superheroes. To those who've been on a steady diet of four-color vigilantes, I suggest you try something new... you just might find you like it.

"Why are the eyes so big?" The answer, first put forward by the Great Master Frederik Schodt, is that most Japanese comics were artistically influenced by Osamu Tezuka, who was in turn influenced by Disney comics and animation. A quick look at the classic Disney work of the '30s and '40s will show you eyes the size of saucers on practically every character. The phrase "They've all got big eyes" is often used to dismiss all Japanese animation and comics. "Big eyes" are certainly present in much American art, so why is it cited as a cultural barrier? I invite such critics to compare the size of the eyes on the character Ariel in *The Little Mermaid* to those of practically any character in *Akira*. It's a stylistic thang, guys... don't let it detract from some really great stories and art.

"Why do all the characters look like they're ten years old?" Conversely, one might ask, why do all American comic characters look so musclebound? Judged by American comic art standards, Japanese manga and animation characters have a tendency to look young. However, seasoned manga and anime fans have no difficulty telling a character's age, just as American comics readers take for granted an Atlas physique when a character dons a skin-tight costume.

"Do you have to translate into idiomatic English? Can't you footnote cultural references?" While it's encouraging that readers are interested, we have to sell to a mass market, not exclusively to manga fans, who make up 30% of our readership. Besides, these comics are entertainment first and foremost. When readers get absorbed in reading an issue of *The Venus Wars*, the last thing they should have to do is disrupt their willing suspension of disbelief to wade through a pedantic note on technical translation details (besides, the characters are Venusians — not Japanese). The object for us as translators is to write the story as if the characters had been written in English to begin with. From a personal standpoint, when my own work is translated (into seven languages, so far) I fervently hope the translator makes my story read like it was originally written in Basque or Mongolian or Akkadian or whatever.

When the explanation cannot be inserted into the dialogue itself, or when we're doing a comic that is inescapably cultural, then we'll gladly footnote. The bottom line is that anyone *that* dedicated to

preserving the purity of manga should learn Japanese and read the comics in the original form and language (the excellent periodical *Mangajin* is highly recommended for such people). Besides, there are hundreds of superb manga that we'll probably never be able to translate and you could be happily reading them. Start today!

"Why do you have to reverse the pages for printing in English?" Japanese people read from right to left, the artists lay out their pages that way, and the reader's eyes move through the panel based on that. By reversing the pages to read left to right, we perfectly adapt the flow for English-language readers. As Masamune Shirow has pointed out, this is complicated slightly by the fact that Japanese is read vertically, and the balloons are sometimes deeper than they are wide (Yoshikazu Yasuhiko is one of the worst for long, thin balloons). Our response to this has been to alter the shape of the balloon in cases where the panel flow would otherwise be disrupted. This is done at great expense, I might add — believe me, printing the books unreversed and unretouched would save us a huge amount. The bottom line is that most of the manga artists I've talked to are happy with the way their material looks in reversed form, and it means thousands more people will read and appreciate the comics.

Printing the comics unreversed would be a challenging and self-defeating proposition. The retailers and distributors would never buy enough copies of a non-reversed book for us to be able to print them anyway. "What about that horror comic that came out unreversed?" I've been asked. Pop quiz: Where's issue #2?

"Why don't you translate more of my favorite comics?" Hey, I don't get to translate *my* favorite comics most of the time. Add the following to your notes. Rule number one for publishing manga in English: the comic must sell enough copies to make a profit. There is no rule number two.

Sometimes the comic in question is owned by a Japanese publisher that is unwilling to sell it in any case, for any number of reasons. Sometimes the artist or publisher wants too much money. Sometimes it takes a truly staggering amount of effort to get the rights, do the translation, retouch, etc., even if the comic might sell okay over here. Theoretically, I'm in this business to have fun and publish some great manga in English.

On the other hand, there are hundreds of new titles released in Japan every month. It is, quite frankly, impossible for me to keep up with them all, and there's always the chance that someone might have spotted a real gem that I missed. So send me copies or show me the book at conventions — I'm always willing to look.

"Do you speak/read/write Japanese?" Yeah. Just don't ask me how well.

"When's the next issue of *The Dirty Pair* coming out?" Ah, class, Adam Warren is an elemental force powered by beer and talent, and not subject to such worldly concerns as schedules. His finished pages trickle in, hand-carried to us by steely-eyed ex-Secret Service agents with portfolios handcuffed to their wrists. Seriously, though, Adam's work is meticulous and high quality and worth waiting for. Issues #1 and #2 are finished and #3 is under construction. The series will hit the stands in May of this year.

That's it for today. Your homework assignment is to pick up *Orion*, *Caravan Kidd*, *The Venus Wars II*, *Version*, *Cheval Noir*, *Intron Depot*, and *Outlanders*. Sayonara!

SNEAK PREVIEW

DIRTY PAIR™

If you have a problem that needs solving, the Worlds Welfare Work Association has just the solution for you. Kei and Yuri, the "Lovely Angels," are trouble-shooters who take care of all kinds of irritating things like recovering stolen biological weapons and cracking smuggling rings. Just don't call them by their well-known nickname: "The Dirty Pair." Sure, they've had heaps of unneccesary casualties and massive collateral damage on each of their missions, but hey — it's not their fault! The central computer has cleared them on every charge. Isn't it strange, though, how things always seem to go to hell in a handbasket whenever they're around?

The Dirty Pair: Sim Hell is written and drawn by **Adam Warren**, with screentones by **Tomoko Saito**. Coming in May from Dark Horse Comics and Studio Proteus. Watch for it!

Q-QUIT JOKING--
--WAKE UP--
HMMM
THUH THAT'S NOT YURI--
--THAT-- THAT'S--
MMMMMMMMM
Oh, Kei...
--me--
Hi there...!
I know how trying being newly, um, deceased can be...
So I wanted to drop by and see you off...!
Heaven
Y-YURI?
YOU'RE DEAD... FOR REAL--?!
Oh, I'm as dead as a doornail... Whatever that is...
It's no big trauma, though.
See, my grades were just high enough to get me "sent upstairs"...!
A+
BUT...
...IF... IF I'M DEAD, TOO...
...WHY AREN'T I WITH YOU...?
Oh, I thought you knew...!
Kei, you're being sent, um...
...somewhere else...

Maybe it's not as bad as it looks...!
?!
HELL
KC
KINGDOM COME
Kei... I'm sooo sorry...!
But I did say that you needed to study more...
OH GOOD...
S-STUDY?!
I'M GOING TO HELL BECAUSE OF SOME STUPID TEST?!!
YURI--
--HELP MEEE--
HAPPY HUNTING GROUND
Kei...you know that's not allowed...!
H-HELP--
Oh...and by the way...
HELP--
:MMFF:
...in case you were wondering...
:MMFF:
...this isn't a dream.

masamune shirow's

ORION™

MANGA MONTH AT DARK HORSE COMICS!

ORION #4

$2.95 U.S.,
$3.70 Canada.
40 B&W pages,
painted cover.

Bimonthly. Shipping
March 30, 1993.

The powerful god Susano fights the Eight Wizards from Hell and the might of the Empire while Seska visits the mystic library world to find the scroll that may suggest a way of controlling him. All the fighting is an attempt to stall for time so Dr. Hebime can set off the Naga-Reactor that will incinerate all the evil Karma in the Empire! But only Susano knows that the magical Dharmaquation is incorrect, and its use threatens the fundamental nature of existence itself! For all his efforts, Susano is too late, as Princess Kushinata sacrifices herself in the core of the Naga-Reactor!

Written and illustrated by: **Masamune Shirow**
Translation by: **Fred Schodt**
and **Toren Smith**
Painted cover by: **Masamune Shirow**

OUTLANDERS™

OUTLANDERS SPECIAL #1

$2.50 U.S.,
$3.15 Canada.
32 B&W pages,
color cover.

Shipping March 23, 1993.

All you Johji Manabe fans out there who have been clamoring for more *Outlanders*, can now thrill to a new story published for the first time in the U.S. In "Battia's Bane," a direct prequel to Dark Horse's *Outlanders* series, Battia sets out to retrieve the wayward Princess Kahm who went into hiding on a planet of cutthroats and thieves after rejecting her father's choice for an arranged marriage. Unfortunately, Battia runs into more adventure along the way than she's bargained for!

Written and illustrated by: **Johji Manabe**
Translated by: **Dana Lewis**
and **Toren Smith**
Color cover by: **Johji Manabe**

VERSION™ 1.4

VERSION 1.4

$2.50 U.S., $3.15 Canada.
32 B&W pages, color cover.

Monthly. Shipping March 16, 1993.

Hap and Eiko have stumbled onto the deserted secret hideaway of Egos, the sentient biochip and its creator, Dr. Higure — under Lake Torrens in Australia! While the mysterious Black Echo's agents close in on the pair, Hap and Eiko frantically try to decipher what is happening with Egos — as its exponentially growing intelligence focuses on the outside world!

Written and illustrated by: **Hisashi Sakaguchi**
Translation by: **Alan Gleason** and **Toren Smith**
Computer cover by: **Jack Harris**

NEW TITLES FROM DARK HORSE INTERNATIONAL

Dark Horse International continues to bring you the best of Dark Horse U.S.'s licensed comics, together with new features and artwork exclusive to the British edition. Available in March are these monthly titles:

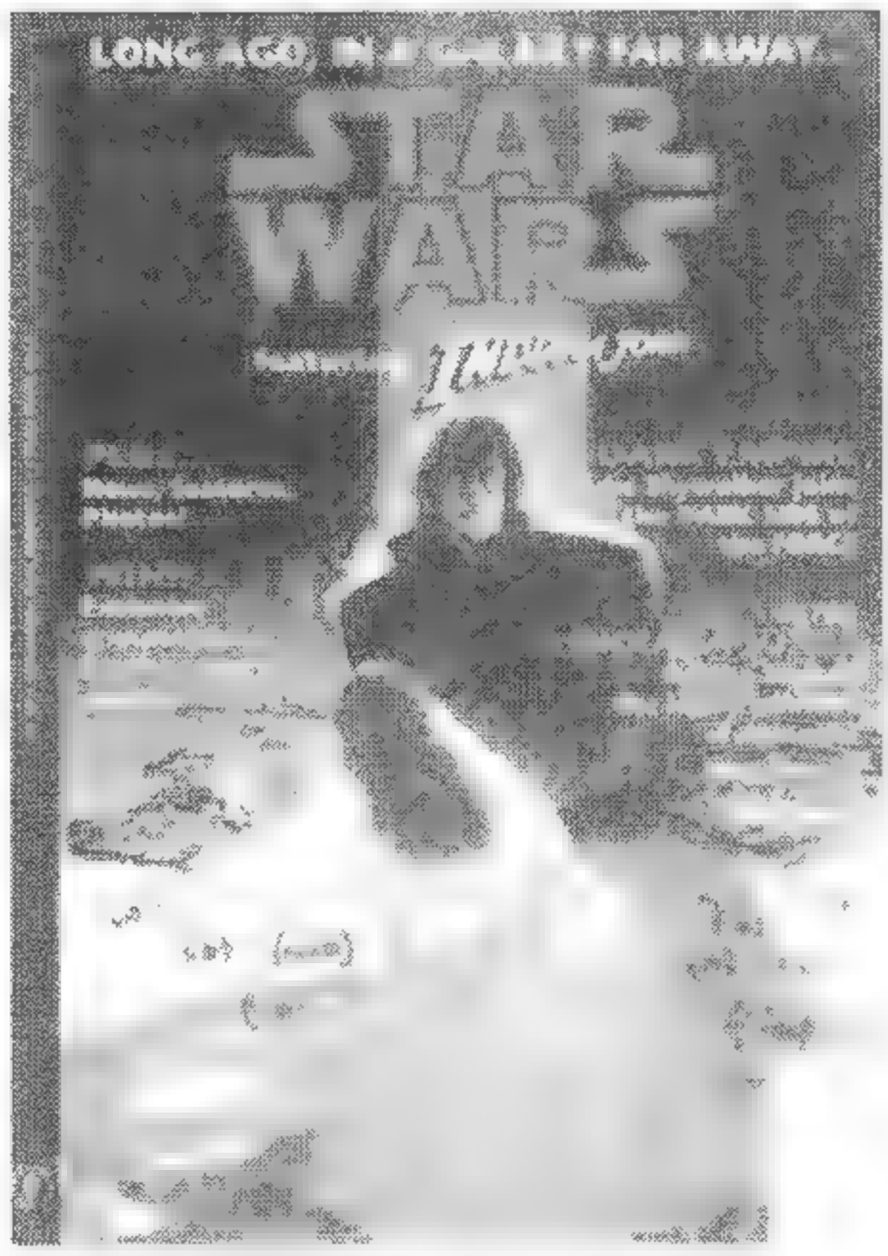
STAR WARS #3 (U.K. EDITION)

The final pair of cards in Dark Horse's exclusive *Star Wars* trading card set is only one of the reasons you should pick up the latest issue of the British edition of *Star Wars*. You'll also find the third chapter of the galaxy-spanning *Star Wars: Dark Empire* saga, in which Han Solo and Lando Calrissian take to the skies in "The Battle for Calamari." And the latest thrilling installment of *Indiana Jones: The Fate of Atlantis* finds Indy globe-trotting in pursuit of clues that will lead him to discover the secret of the metal Orachalum.

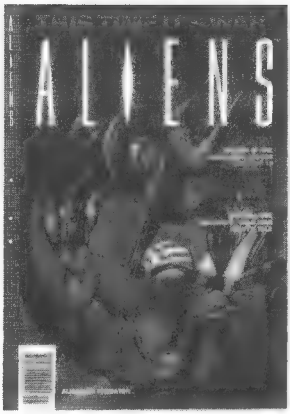
New material includes a feature on the history of George Lucas' special effects outfit, Industrial Light and Magic, plus the latest *Star Wars* news in our Imperial Probe column. And learn the secrets of the mysterious Vima-da-Boda.

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada, £1.50 U.K.
48 color pages, magazine format, painted cover.

Biweekly. Shipping March 9, 1993.



ALIENS VOLUME 2 #4 (U.K. EDITION)



New features in the latest issue of Dark Horse International's *Aliens* anthology include exclusive news on the forthcoming *Aliens vs. Predator* movie. Also, the trend for "directors cuts" of classic sci-fi movies gets a critical overview, and the regular Technical Readout feature looks at Remote Sentry Weapons Systems.

And we've even left room for some comic strips! The story of the second *Aliens* movie continues in *Aliens: Newt's Tale* while the true horror of the *Aliens: Hive* is revealed for the first time. The action in *Predator: Cold War* switches from New York to Oregon to Siberia. And there's even the latest mini-chapter in the *Aliens vs. Predator 2* saga, plus a cover painting by **John Bolton**.

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada, £1.50 U.K.
48 color pages, magazine format, painted cover.

Biweekly. Shipping March 2, 1993.

ALIENS VOLUME 2 #5 (U.K. EDITION)

Alien^3 special effects artist **Chris Halls** provides a terrifying new cover painting which gets the fifth issue of *Aliens* U.K. off to a flying start. Inside, Ripley saves Newt from a fate worse than death in *Aliens: Newt's Tale*, while in *Aliens: Hive* a stranded landing party is forced to enter the Aliens' lair. *Predator: Cold War* brings Lt. Ligachev face to face with the chilling terror of the Predators, and there's a bonus *Aliens vs. Predator 2* story as well.

New features include a Technical Readout on the Armored Personnel Carrier and a report on the new *Alien*^{3} exhibition in London.

$2.95 U.S., $3.70 Canada, £1.50 U.K.
48 color pages, magazine format, painted cover.

Biweekly. Shipping March 16, 1993.

THE HORSE'S MOUTH

10956 SE MAIN STREET, MILWAUKIE, OREGON 97222

Whasup, Kris?

Many thanks to you and Dark Horse for the "Nifty Gift" that I received after my letter was published in issue #8 (I'll try to keep this one *much* shorter). You wanted to know if I received any correspondence from my letter. Well, I did — one to my home from a "Talena" out of San Antonio, TX, who has counted 64 different Predators and named them. How's that for a devoted fan? I also received another, in the form of a letter to you in issue #11. It seems that I might have peeved some people off a bit, which was not the idea, BUT it did cause someone else to write in and convey the message I wanted to in a much more eloquent manner (thanks, Jan). Which proves, Kris, don't write a letter when you're mad because things don't come out like they're supposed to. "Opinions should be put forth in a responsible manner." Period, that's it. Again, thanks Jan, and feel free to write, as I will write you.

It seems that a lot of artists, writers, and publishers got a little behind lately. There has been such an influx of new talent and products that things got haywire. Well, no harm done, it just made the wait all that more satisfying. I'm anxiously waiting for *Predator vs. Magnus Robot Fighter. Star Wars: Dark Empire* #6 was very nice. As one of the most loyal *Star Wars* fans I was/am impressed. You did not deviate from the original story yet you created an entirely new one. WOW!!

Now, the new stuff. *Aliens: Newt's Tale*, liked it a lot, fills the gaps for the in-between story lovers. Gives us a sense of how things were. The newest and most exciting news is the movie version of *Aliens vs. Predator*. As I understand, it is a joint project with Dark Horse. Will it follow the same storyline? Will *Cyberantics* be released any time soon, or has it been released already? Will there be an *Aliens: Hive II*? What news on the *Concrete* movie? *RoboCop versus The Terminator* — cool. *The Terminator: Endgame* — cool, but seemed a bit rushed (pun). *Spider-Man vs. Predator*?

Kris, I appreciate the space, and all the excellent titles that Dark Horse puts out. As I previously stated, you are #1 (to me) and I don't see that failing. Readers, please keep sending your rants and raves to *DHI/DHP*. They need to know, just show a little control on the meaning or the harshness of your messages. Remember, the power of the pen is very strong. Use it wisely.

Louis "Luke" Byrne
7699 Sandalwood Dr.
Newburgh, IN 47630

P.S. Read what you collect, don't just collect for profit!

I appreciate the feedback, Luke. By the way, if any of you "Horse's Mouth" lettercol writers want to hear from other readers directly, please let me know so I can include your full address — otherwise I'll just print your name, city, and state.

Now, to answer some of those questions... Cyberantics *is already out, and you should be able to find it at your local comics shop. If not, try a good comics mail order firm such as Bud Plant, Westfield, or Mile High Comics. No plans in the immediate future for* Aliens: Hive II, *or for a* Spider-Man vs. Predator *crossover. As for the* Aliens vs. Predator *and* Concrete *movies, they're both in various stages of pre-production. You'll be hearing more news about these and other movies from Dark Horse Entertainment in a future issue of the* Insider. *And finally, thanks for the good words on* Star Wars: Dark Empire. *It's been one of our most popular series to date. You and other* Star Wars *fans will want to check out pages 16-17 in this issue of the* Insider *for the first installment of* Tales of the Jedi, *written by Tom Veitch (*Star Wars: Dark Empire*), pencilled by Chris Gossett, and inked by Mike Brarreirro. The six-issue strip will continue as a color series later this fall.*

Dear Dark Horse,

First of all I would like to say I am a great fan and that I read just about all your books, with *Grendel* and *Next Men* being my favorites. I am sad to say that this letter is not about praise but about a grievance. In the last week of August when the sixth issue of *Next Men* came out, I got my issues and took out two full sets of coupons and sent them to the address on the coupon. I had bought three issues of each of the first six books (one to save and two for two sets of cards) at $2.50 each ($7.50 for three) times six, which equals $45.00. Quite a bit of money. I sent these certificates with $2.00 for the shipping and handling, plus I sent it second-day air in a big brown envelope. Now that it is the middle of November (November 17, 1992 to be exact) I am wondering where my two sets of trading cards are. Please don't leave me, a devoted, long-time fan, standing in the dark. If it's in the mail, then fine — you have my deepest apology, but I must stress that John Byrne is one of my favorite artists and I can't wait to get my hands on his wonderfully crafted trading cards. Please continue producing the fine work that you do, to keep your fans satisfied.

Michael J. Bressi
Aston, PA

As this column is being penned (or perhaps I should say keyboarded!), you and every other patient and devoted John Byrne's Next Men *fan who sent in their certificates will have already received their trading card set(s). According to our records, your sets should have arrived shortly after you wrote to "The Horse's Mouth." I hope you're enjoying them. Thanks for your patience.*

The delay in fulfilling orders was due to the fact that John Byrne's Next Men *#6 was moved back on the shipping schedule to late August 1992. The deadline for sending in orders for the trading card sets was extended to allow readers enough time to respond — and the response was overwhelming! Edward Martin III, who handled fulfillment details for this Dark Horse promotion, reports that nearly 10,000* John Byrne's Next Men *card sets were sent out.*

Dear Dark Horse:

I had just finished rebuilding my igloo after last night's terrible blizzard, and all that grueling physical labor prompted me to jump on my dog sled and "mush" my way to the local comics shop. Once there, I shelled out every last one of my beaver pelts on all my favorite comics from your company and others alike. As I was leaving, I glanced back at the comics shelves and was startled by a dazzling array of "gimmick" covers. Then I noticed not one Dark Horse comic had these. Why? Because you're an independent? Because you don't have the technology? No! Because your comics have all they need: great stories and respectable artwork.

Once home I plopped down on my polar bear skin rug and read my newly bought entertainment. I then meditated many long hours on the quality and meaning of the stories I'd just read. I must say that it is valiant that a comics company tries to put out excellent superhero work, and it's marvelous that a company puts out some cheap reading material. Your company, though, puts out stimulating and thought-provoking work. After reading your books once, I can usually read them again, this time soaking up even more detail. Also, your company has much more variety, from hard-core action (*Aliens*) to comedy (*Boris the Bear*). No matter what comic Dark Horse puts out, it succeeds with flying colors.

I also recently found out that you are reprinting some of your older material. I am extremely happy with this because many people have missed these issues, and now you're giving them (me) a second chance.

Hark! I can hear the wild moose calling!

Sincerely yours,
Jason Gordon
Prince George, British Columbia

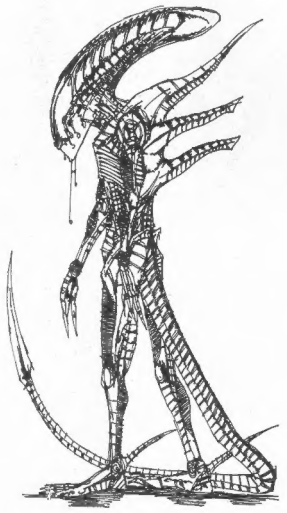
Greetings to our neighbors to the north! Thanks for the colorful and complimentary letter. I can just picture you mushing your huskies home, your precious bundle of comics carefully wrapped to protect them from the elements. You work hard for those beaver pelts, so you want quality and value when you shell them out for comics. We feel that, pelt for pelt, there's no better value than Dark Horse Comics.

While it's true that we don't go all out for gimmick covers, we're certainly not above enhancing some of our comics with special features such as gate-fold or foil-embossed covers. When gimmick covers are used by some publishers, I'm reminded of the old phrase "You can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear." Does a glow-in-the-dark cover compensate for a weak story or poor art? No! When Dark Horse employs the use of special effects or features, it's more like "the icing on the cake" — and Dark Horse bakes a pretty mean cake.

I hope that Dark Horse Comics helps to keep those long northern nights a bit more entertaining, Jason. Thanks for writing.

Letters can be sent to: ***The Horse's Mouth, c/o Dark Horse Comics, 10956 SE Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222.*** *Let us hear from you — we really appreciate input from our readers. This is your forum for questions and comments about Dark Horse Comics. If your letter is published in "The Horse's Mouth," you'll receive a nifty prize from the Dark Horse coffers. It could be a Dark Horse pin, it could be a Dark Horse tattoo or poster, it could be... well, you'll never find out unless you write.*

Keep reading!
Kris Young



This eerie Alien artwork was submitted to the *Insider* by Matt Borel of New South Wales, Australia. Thanks, Matt! When sending in art, please do as Matt has done and send a good photocopy, not original art.

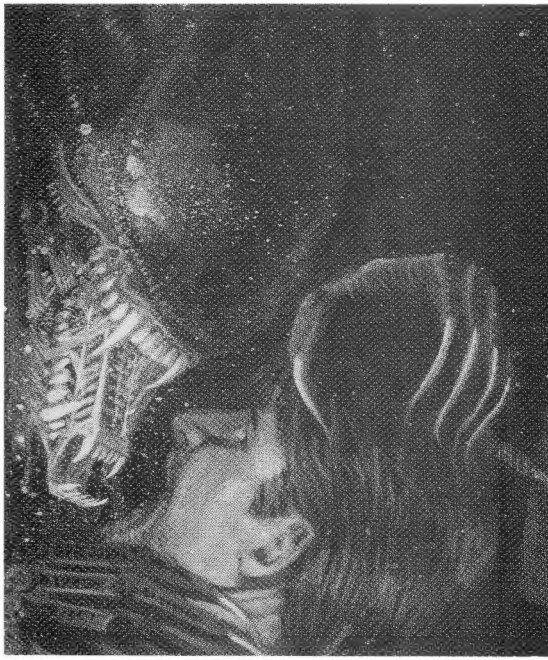
INSIDE OUT

COMING IN MAY

ALIENS: SACRIFICE
ART BY PAUL JOHNSON

SHIPPING APRIL 6

Aliens: Colonial Marines #4
Aliens Volume 2 #6
(U.K. edition)
Classic Star Wars #8
Concrete: Eclectica #1
Dark Horse Presents #73
Dominion (softcover collection)
Grendel: War Child #9
The New Two-Fisted Tales
Nexus Book One (softcover collection)
Rio at Bay (softcover collection)



SHIPPING APRIL 13

Baseball Greats #3:
The Harmon Killebrew Story
The Blue Lily #2
Cheval Noir #41
John Byrne's Next Men #14
Star Wars #4 (U.K. edition)
The Venus Wars II #11

SHIPPING APRIL 20

Aliens Volume 2 #7
(U.K. edition)
Caravan Kidd #10
Lux and Alby #1
Redblade #1
Sex Warrior #1
Version #1.5

SHIPPING APRIL 27

Aliens: Rogue #1
Dark Horse Comics #9
Dark Horse Insider #18
Don Martin Lithograph #2
Hard Boiled (softcover collection)
Predator: Race War #0
Star Wars: Dark Empire
(softcover collection)
Terminal Point #3
Virus #3

SHIPPING IN MAY

ADVANCE SOLICITATION!
Star Wars: Dark Empire
(signed limited edition hardcover)

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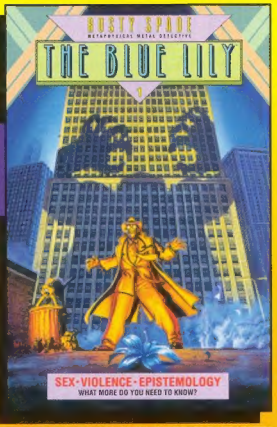
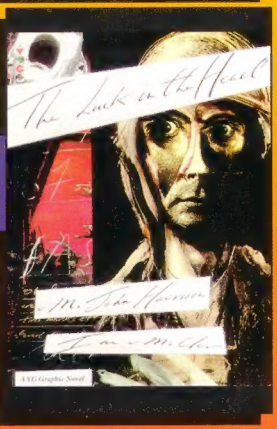
PROPELLERMAN #2! PAGE 2

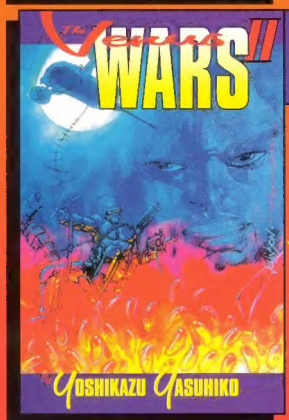


THE BLUE LILY #1! PAGE 3

PREDATOR: RACE WAR #2! PAGE 5



THE LUCK IN THE HEAD! PAGE 10



THE VENUS WARS II #10! PAGE 18

APPLESEED COLLECTION #4! PAGE 19

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